

H O YOU ME



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ROOMS THAT WORK

When selling a house, it is important to think about what potential buyers might find appealing. In general, most would say they're looking for a large kitchen, extra space in the master bedroom and good closet space. Maximizing what you have in these areas is a good start to giving your house a leg up on the competition. But as telecommuting has become more popular in the workforce, many — if not all — homeowners are looking for an area set aside to work from home.

If your house doesn't have a den and you've yet to designate office space in your home, don't fret. Many places in your home could be fashioned into an office: a sunroom, extra bedroom, attic or basement. If there's no clear space, designating an area that is part of a larger room may give potential buyers an idea of how they could incorporate a home office into the living space. For example, a desk could be pushed against a wall in a breakfast nook or an area of the living room. It should be something that blends into the décor of the room. As easy as it is to have a home office added to your house, it will pique homebuyers' interest and could even add to your asking price.

HOME, ANONYMOUS HOME

There are so many things to keep in mind when you are preparing your house for sale, from keeping it spotless to maximizing the lighting. But one of the most simple and effective tips to keep in mind is to make your home look and feel like *anyone* could live there.

Too many family photos on the wall or displaying your children's artwork on the refrigerator really personalizes a house — which is great if you're living there but can be a little off-putting to potential buyers, who may find it difficult to envision their belongings in your home.

Make a move before you move. Pack up all family photos (unless they will leave a gaping space on the wall), sports trophies, collectible items, knickknacks and personal souvenirs that really tell a lot about your personality. Doing this will eliminate your personal mark in the house, leaving it open to a potential buyer's own interpretation of the space.

However, be sure not to just place your boxes in the basement, attic or garage (which can make these areas appear cluttered and less spacious). Ask a friend to store them for you or rent a storage area for a few months until you move. Removing clutter is part of the house-selling process anyway, so in doing this, you'll quickly be a step ahead of the buying/selling game.



Scents and Sensibility



According to the Sense of Smell Institute, smell has the power to influence “our mood, how long we stay in a room, who we talk to and who we want to see again.” If this is true, it makes sense that it also could have a substantial impact on how buyers perceive your house.

Welcoming potential buyers into a smelly house is number one on the “Do Not Do This” list of selling. Pet and cigarette smells are the most common offenders, with mildew close behind. These smells can linger, and home-

owners often get used to them without realizing it. Therefore, it’s important to get an objective, honest opinion on how your house smells.

If your house has been deemed less-than-pleasant by a trusted friend or family member, be sure to eradicate the odors before showing it. Steer clear of room scents and perfumes (which can be just as offensive) and strive for a neutral scent. Professional carpet cleaning and simple cleansers (such as vinegar, bleach or baking soda mixed with water) can work wonders.

CRS: Top of the Line

Choosing the right REALTOR® is the key to a successful sale. Picking an agent can be tough. But knowing the credentials to look for in a REALTOR® will help both the seller and the buyer feel at ease throughout the entire transaction.

A Certified Residential Specialist (CRS) agent has an outstanding level of achievement in the profession. CRS agents have both a high volume of sales and high number of transactions, as well as advanced training in areas such as business planning, real estate investing, marketing and technology. As additional peace of mind, CRS agents must maintain membership in the NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS® and abide by its Code of Ethics.

CRS agents are in the top 4 percent of agents in the country. They offer years of experience, demonstrated success and advice to help you make smart decisions about selling your home. The real estate market is tough, fast-paced and competitive, but with a CRS agent by your side, selling your home becomes an enjoyable experience.



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